

group of exceptions to medical improvement (see paragraph (d) of this section) applies, we will proceed to step (5). If an exception from the second group of exceptions to medical improvement applies, your disability will be found to have ended. The second group of exceptions to medical improvement may be considered at any point in this process.

(5) If medical improvement is related to your ability to work or if one of the first group of exceptions to medical improvement applies, we will determine (considering all your impairments) whether the requirements of appendix 1 of this subpart are met or equaled. If your impairment(s) meets or equals the requirements of appendix 1 of this subpart, your disability will be found to continue. If not, your disability will be found to have ended.

(g) *The month in which we will find you are no longer disabled.* If the evidence shows that you are no longer disabled, we will find that your disability ended in the earliest of the following months—

(1) The month the evidence shows you are no longer disabled under the rules set out in this section, and you were disabled only for a specified period of time in the past;

(2) The month the evidence shows you are no longer disabled under the rules set out in this section, but not earlier than the month in which we mail you a notice saying that the information we have shows that you are not disabled;

(3) The month in which you demonstrated your ability to engage in substantial gainful activity (following completion of a trial work period); however, we may pay you benefits for certain months in and after the reentitlement period which follows the trial work period. (See §404.1592 for a discussion of the trial work period, §404.1592a for a discussion of the reentitlement period, and §404.337 for when your benefits will end.);

(4) The month in which you return to full-time work, with no significant medical restrictions and acknowledge that medical improvement has occurred, as long as we expected your impairment(s) to improve (see §404.1591);

(5) The first month in which you failed to do what we asked, without good cause when the rule set out in paragraph (e)(2) of this section applies;

(6) The first month in which the question of continuing disability arose and we could not find you, when the rule set out in paragraph (e)(3) of this section applies;

(7) The first month in which you failed to follow prescribed treatment without good cause, when the rule set out in paragraph (e)(4) of this section applies; or

(8) The first month you were told by your physician that you could return to work provided there is no substantial conflict between your physician's and your statements regarding your awareness of your capacity for work and the earlier date is supported by medical evidence.

(h) *Before we stop your benefits.* Before we determine you are no longer disabled, we will give you a chance to explain why we should not do so. Sections 404.1595 and 404.1597 describe your rights (including appeal rights) and the procedures we will follow.

[50 FR 50126, Dec. 6, 1985; 51 FR 7063, Feb. 28, 1986; 51 FR 16015, Apr. 30, 1986, as amended at 57 FR 30121, July 8, 1992; 59 FR 1635, Jan. 12, 1994]

BLINDNESS

§404.1581 Meaning of blindness as defined in the law.

We will consider you blind under the law for a period of disability and for payment of disability insurance benefits if we determine that you are statutorily blind. Statutory blindness is defined in the law as central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of correcting lens. An eye which has a limitation in the field of vision so that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees is considered to have a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less. Your blindness must meet the duration requirement in §404.1509. We do not consider certain felony-related and prison-related impairments, as explained in §404.1506.

[45 FR 55584, Aug. 20, 1980, as amended at 48 FR 5715, Feb. 8, 1983]